

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

For More Information Contact

Tim Jones, Environmental Health Manager, Crater Health District, 804-862-8942, tim.jones@vdh.virginia.gov

Tiffany Cox, Public Information Officer, Office: 804-862-8951, Cell: 804-704-7554, tiffany.cox@vdh.virginia.gov

**FOX FOUND POSITIVE FOR RABIES,
PENDER AVENUE IN PETERSBURG**

(Petersburg, Va.)-The Petersburg Health Department received confirmation that a fox collected from the Pender Avenue area of Petersburg tested positive for rabies. A Petersburg resident spotted a fox that was behaving strangely and reported the situation to Petersburg Animal Care and Control. The animal died of its wounds prior to being collected for testing. Petersburg Health Department and Petersburg Animal Care and Control issued a Rabies Information Alert on Wednesday, March 30, 2016. Authorities posted the rabies alert in the areas of Pender, Walker and Walsh Avenues. Animal owners are advised to confirm that all vaccinations, especially rabies, are current.

“Please notify public health officials or animal control immediately if you are a resident of Pender, Walker or Walsh Avenues and think that you or your pet(s) had contact with the infected fox,” emphasized Alton Hart, Jr., MD, MPH, Director, Petersburg Health Department.

“Rabies is a serious and life-threatening disease. Petersburg Health Department and Animal Care and Control work closely together to help keep residents safe. Please notify Petersburg Animal Care and Control of any animals displaying abnormal behavior,” shared Tim Jones, Environmental Health Manager, Petersburg Health Department.

The Health Department strongly advises that people take the following steps to prevent families and pets from being exposed to rabies:

- Vaccinate all cats, dogs and ferrets against rabies and keep them up to date.
- Avoid contact with wild animals or stray cats and dogs.
- Do not feed wild animals or stray cats and dogs.
- Report stray animals to your local animal control agency.
- Eliminate outdoor food sources around the home.
- Keep pets confined to your property or walk them on a leash.

Rabies is a preventable viral disease found in mammals such as bats, raccoons and foxes. It is spread through contact with the saliva of a rabid (infected) animal, most often through a bite or scratch. Early symptoms include fever, headache and general weakness or discomfort. Rabies affects the brain and ultimately leads to death. It can be prevented with vaccination, but once symptoms begin, there is no cure. If your pet needs to be vaccinated for rabies, Petersburg Animal Care and Control and Crater Road Animal Hospital will host a rabies clinic at 464 South Crater Road, Petersburg, Virginia 23803. The clinic will be held on Saturday, April 2, 2016 from 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm. Rabies vaccinations will be \$10 each.

To report any other suspicious animal, please contact Petersburg Animal Care and Control at 804-732-4222. For more information about rabies, or how to protect your family call 804-863-1652. Also, you can visit Crater Health District online at craterhd.net, or on Facebook [/CRATERHD](https://www.facebook.com/CRATERHD) and Twitter [@CraterHD](https://twitter.com/CraterHD).

###